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Speaking later in regard to which schools should teach vocations, he says:

Neither the women nor the men in academic high schools as a rule are prepared by training and contact with industries to teach boys the specialized dexterity and knowledge necessary in common skilled occupations. Shall we then erect separate, distinct, vocational schools under public control? It is to be admitted that in some instances this step is necessary in order to achieve the objects desired, although even in separate schools the individual cannot be permanently separated from opportunity for general and liberal education. As we have indicated (page 38) there cannot be a safe divorcement in the lifetime of an individual between general and liberal, and specialized vocational education under a democracy. Obviously, new types of teachers, new processes, and productive shops will be needed in public high schools, if the divorcement is to be avoided [p. 140].

One section of the book gives a careful review of the development of federal participation in vocational education, including a critical discussion of the Smith-Hughes Act. Another section, consisting of five chapters, undertakes a detailed consideration of the school problems in vocational courses in agriculture, mechanical and trade industries, commerce, and home economics. The concrete character of these chapters makes them of especial value to the school administrator and to students seeking to become familiar with the organization of vocational courses.

The book is well organized for use as a textbook. Each chapter is clearly outlined and is followed by a summary of important conclusions. Excellent bibliographies are furnished throughout. At the close of every chapter a series of carefully prepared exercises is given to stimulate further thinking. Numerous tables and graphs are used. The book is well adapted for use as a basic text in introductory courses in vocational education.

Reconstruction of school curricula.—The school curriculum has been the focal point for much of the current criticism of education. A demand has come from many sources for less formality and more vitality in the course of study. Departments of education in many schools throughout the country are devoting much time to research in this field. Professor Meriam, who has been experimenting for a number of years with a reformed curriculum in the University of Missouri Elementary School, has written a book¹ in which he attacks the whole problem of curriculum-making.

The point of view and the aim of the volume are well expressed by the author when, in speaking of the usual means of changing the curriculum, he says:

All of the changes indicated are but a sort of patchwork. Omissions are made where the curriculum becomes crowded. Enrichment is suggested where the work seems barren. Motivation through the introduction of really vital subject-matter is attempted where the usual work does not appeal. The practical is introduced where

¹ JUNIUS L. MERIAM, *Child Life and the Curriculum*. Yonkers-on-Hudson, New York: World Book Co., 1920. Pp. xii+538. \$3.60.

the course of study seems of little value. By such means and others, our school curriculum has been continually changing. Indeed, continual change is necessary if the school is to serve a rapidly changing and rapidly advancing civilization. But the changes noted are without any fundamental principle; they are spasmodic, personal, temporary, local. In place of such chance adjustments is it not possible to *make* a curriculum of a more permanent character and of universal application? This is the problem undertaken in this volume [p. 74].

In the first five chapters of the book the author sets up his point of view and reviews the criticisms which are commonly urged against the curriculum. In chapter vi there is a discussion of the social conditions which serve as a basis for educational principles. In working out these principles, Mr. Meriam maintains that there should be a close co-operation between students of education and sociology, the latter being held responsible for the immediate research into actual social conditions. Chapter vii gives a brief survey of the educational tendencies apparent in recent changes which should be familiar to the curriculum-maker. In the next five chapters the author presents five basic principles which should guide in the construction of a curriculum. A statement of these principles, which are founded upon social problems and the interests of the individual, will indicate the character of these chapters:

1. The curriculum should provide for meeting the immediate needs of the pupils primarily; only secondarily should it provide for the preparation of pupils for later needs.
2. The curriculum should be expressed in terms of concrete everyday activities of pupils and adults rather than in terms of generalization such as are found in traditional subjects.
3. The curriculum should provide for great individual differences in order to meet varying tastes and abilities of the pupils.
4. The curriculum should be so organized that the various topics may easily be interchanged not only within any grade during the year but from grade to grade.
5. The curriculum should provide for an acquaintance with both work and leisure [p. 382].

The next four chapters present four school studies which are proposed as the content for a curriculum. The remainder of the book discusses various details of the proposal and gives an evaluation of the methods and results in the use of such a curriculum.

The reader may be unable to agree with all of the conclusions of the book, but it furnishes material for critical thought, and will be of interest to those dealing with courses of study. The manner of presentation is somewhat tedious at times, and one feels that occasional condensations would serve to emphasize the content. The impression left with the reader is, not that the book has solved the problem of the curriculum, but that it has furnished evidence from one type of experiment which is significant and which should be added to the general body of data bearing upon this subject.

New series of education books.—Students of education will be interested in the beginning of a new series of books, edited by George D. Strayer, entitled